

REMARKS

By this Amendment, the claims are amended to broaden the allowable subject matter while more clearly indicating that a voucher is not a bank payment or cheque payment, what is meant by voucher type and by the term “updating.” Claims 1-14 are pending.

The Office Action maintained the rejection of claims 1-2 and 5-13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being unpatentable in view of Martin et al. (U.S. 5,909,485; “Martin”). Applicants traverse the rejection because Martin fails to disclose, teach or suggest all the features recited in the rejected claims.

For example, Martin fails to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed method for updating a subscriber’s account credit in a telecommunications system where at least two different types of buyable vouchers can be used for making deposits in the account, the types of buyable vouchers differing from each other at least in the price of a call unit; the method comprising: “defining at least two different ways of updating the credit, the different ways of updating differing from each other at least in the way the credit is calculated; maintaining information indicating the type of a last used voucher;. . . and selecting the way of calculating the credit on the basis of the type of the last used voucher and on the basis of the type of the second voucher,” as recited in independent claim 1 and its dependent claims.

Similarly, Martin fails to disclose teach or suggest the claimed arrangement for updating a subscriber’s account credit in a telecommunications system where the subscriber can pre-pay for the subscriber’s calls by making deposits in the subscriber’s account using at least two different types of buyable vouchers, the type of the buyable vouchers differing from each other at least in the price of a call unit, and where the system applies a first method to update the credit, the arrangement being arranged to “detect a possible change of voucher type when the credit is updated; and, in response to said detection, to apply a second method to update the credit, the second method differing from the first method at least in the way the credit is calculated,” as recited in independent claim 8 and its dependent claims.

Further, Martin fails to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed network element in a telecommunications system where a subscriber of the system can pre-pay for the subscriber’s calls by making deposits in the subscriber’s account using at least two different types of buyable vouchers, the types differing from each other at least in the price of a call unit, which element includes a database or can be arranged to have access to a database, where account credit is maintained, the network element comprising “a first mechanism to determine the type of the voucher last used by the subscriber, a second mechanism to determine the type of

the new voucher which the subscriber is going to use to update the subscriber's credit, and a third mechanism to select a method of updating the credit among at least two different updating methods on the basis of the types of said vouchers, the different updating methods differing from each other at least in the way the credit is calculated," as recited in independent claim 12 and its dependent claims.

Although Martin discloses registering a monetary payment, that registration merely registers the amount of money included in the payment. However, that registration is not a registration of a type of a voucher used to make the payment. Thus, Martin fails to teach "maintaining information indicating the type of a last voucher used," as recited in independent claim 1.

Further, Martin fails to teach or suggest the use of different voucher types at all, i.e., differing from each other at least in the price of a call unit, as explained in the specification. Thus, Martin fails to disclose, teach or suggest any operation recited in the rejected claims relating to different types of vouchers.

Moreover, Martin fails to teach or suggest different credit updating methods, which differ at least in the way the credit is calculated. Rather, Martin teaches merely debiting one or account or a different account in response to user interaction. However, such debiting does not correspond to using a second method instead of a first one to debit the same credit. Thus, Martin fails to disclose, teach or suggest any operation recited in the rejected claims relating to different credit updating methods.

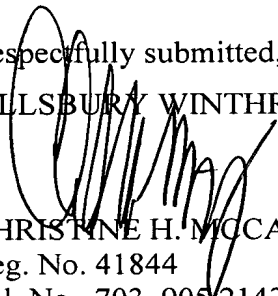
Accordingly, Martin fails to disclose, teach or suggest all the features recited in the rejected claims including the operations performed regarding different types of vouchers and different credit updating methods. Therefore, claims 1-14 are allowable over Martin.

All objections have been addressed. If anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, Applicants request that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,
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